

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ☐  
no ☒

Property Name: Bethel United Methodist Church Inventory Number: WA-I-884  
Address: 21006 Twin Springs Drive (MD 804) Historic district: ☐ yes ☒ no  
City: Chewsville Zip Code: 21721 County: Washington  
USGS Quadrangle(s): Hagerstown  
Property Owner: Bethel United Methodist Church Tax Account ID Number: 029057  
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 221 Tax Map Number: 51  
Project: Chewsville Streetscape Improvements Agency: Maryland State Highway Administration  
Agency Prepared By: A.D. Marble & Company  
Preparer's Name: Emma Young Date Prepared: 3/26/2007

Documentation is presented in: Kendall, Reverend D. Homer  
1955 1805-1955: History of Bethel Evangelical United Brethren Church. Quincy Orphanage  
Press: Quincy, Pennsylvania.

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: ☐ Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

*Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:*

Name of the District/Property: \_\_\_\_\_

Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligible: ☐ yes Listed: ☐ yes

Site visit by MHT Staff ☐ yes ☒ no Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

The Bethel United Methodist Church, located at 21006 Twin Springs Drive, Chewsville, Washington County, Maryland, is situated on a 1.5-acre tract on the north side of Twin Springs Road (MD 804). Built in 1868, the Romanesque Revival style church is oriented on a north-south axis and stands two stories tall. An asphalt-paved drive leads to an asphalt-paved parking lot, located to the west of the building.

The side-gabled, brick, 1868 core stands one-and-a-half stories tall and rests on a fieldstone foundation. The steeply pitched roof of the side-gabled core is sheathed in slate shingles. An interior, brick chimney extends from the northern slope of the roof. Gabled wings extend outward from the north and south elevations. A brick, three-story, square bell tower is situated at the core's southeast corner. A two-story, circa-1930, brick addition extends from the east elevation. A circa-1960, two-story, shed-roof, brick addition extends from the north elevation of the historic core and the circa-1930 addition. A two-story, gabled, brick addition constructed in 2006 extends from the north elevation of the circa-1960 addition.

The first church in Chewsville stood near Trovinger's Mill, approximately one mile west of the present-day village. The

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MHT Comments:

Ann T. Tamm  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

1/3/08

Date

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Reviewer, National Register Program

1/7/08

Date

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congregation of what would become the Bethel United Methodist Church (previously the Bethel Evangelical United Brethren Church) first met in the Spessard farmhouse located at the southwest end of the village (Shilling/Spessard Farm, WA-I-051). In 1836, the Chewsville group purchased a small, quarter-acre lot for \$10 from John Spessard, the son of Michael and Christina Spessard, directly across from the Spessard Farm (Kendall 1955: 4-5). A year later, a small, stone church building was erected for the cost of \$444.94, and shortly thereafter the congregation purchased an adjoining parcel, which hosted the Spessard Family cemetery, to use as the Bethel Church cemetery.

The congregation soon outgrew the small, stone building, and the trustees of the church decided that a new building must be erected. In September of 1867, the board of trustees purchased a parcel of land for \$300 from Joel Doub on the north side of what was then the Hagerstown-Cavetown Pike (Twin Springs Drive/MD 804). Subsequently, the old, stone church building (20920 Twin Springs Drive) adjacent to the Spessard Farm was converted to a private residence (Schildt 2005: 20).

The cornerstone for the new church building was laid in 1868, four years before Chewsville became an election district. The new church consisted of a "substantial brick building, forty by fifty-six feet, with cupola and bell." Throughout the next century, the Bethel Church underwent a series of additions and repairs, including a prominent circa-1930, square addition to the east elevation, a circa-1960 addition to the north elevation, and in 2006, a large addition to the rear (north) elevation of the building. The 400-member Bethel United Methodist Church completed the 2006 addition, which currently houses the family life center (Schildt 2005: 20).

#### Significance Evaluation:

The Bethel United Methodist Church, located at 21006 Twin Springs Drive (MD 804) in Chewsville, Washington County, Maryland is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The property is not directly associated with a significant specific event or broad pattern in the history of religion.

According to National Register of Historic Places evaluation guidelines established by the National Park Service, the quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, site, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. that are associated with lives of significant persons in our past;
- C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction; or
- D. that have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory (National Park Service 1997).

The Bethel United Methodist Church also requires evaluation under National Register Criteria Consideration A for religious properties. According to the National Register of Historic Places evaluation guidelines established by the National Park Service, a religious property requires justification on architectural, artistic, and/or historic grounds to avoid any appearance of judgment by government about the validity of any religion or belief. Historic significance for a religious property cannot be established on the merits of religious doctrine, but rather, for architectural or artistic values or for important historic or cultural forces that the property represents (National Park Service 1997).

The Bethel United Methodist Church, located at 21006 Twin Springs Drive (MD 804) is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. The property is not associated with any events that have made a significant

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MHT Comments:

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Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

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Date

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Reviewer, National Register Program

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Date

contribution to the broad patterns of history.

The Bethel United Methodist Church is not eligible under Criterion B because it has no known association with the lives of individuals of historical importance. The property is not strongly associated with a significant religious leader.

The Bethel United Methodist Church is not eligible under Criterion C because the building does not possess the architectural distinctiveness necessary to qualify it for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The building exhibits many alterations and additions, to the extent that the building does not represent a specific type, period, or method of construction. The building does not possess high artistic values.

The property was not evaluated for eligibility under Criterion D as part of the architectural survey and evaluation.

The Bethel United Methodist Church is not eligible under Criteria Consideration A for historic events, significant persons, or architectural and/or artistic distinction. The property is not significant under a theme in the history of religion or any other broad patterns of history nor is the property significantly associated with traditional cultural values. The property does not contain any association with persons important in religious history. The Bethel United Methodist Church does not possess architectural or artistic distinction.

The Bethel United Methodist Church exhibits many alterations and additions that hinder the property's ability to convey the period of construction (1868-1962). The property possesses integrity of setting and location, maintaining its location on the north side of Twin Springs Drive (MD 804), amidst late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century dwellings. The original, 1868, rectangular footprint is no longer discernible, and therefore, the building no longer retains integrity of design. The south (front) elevation has been altered by the presence of the circa-1930 addition, and the east and west elevations are altered by the circa-1960 and 2006 additions. The building contains replacement windows and doors, all of which detract from integrity of materials and workmanship. Although the building is still used as a church for the Bethel United Methodist congregation, it no longer retains the feeling and association of a late-nineteenth-century church building. Therefore, the property does not retain sufficient integrity to deem it eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

#### References:

Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson

1877 An Illustrated Atlas of Washington County, Maryland. Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Kendall, Reverend D. Homer

1955 1805-1955: History of Bethel Evangelical United Brethren Church. Quincy Orphanage Press: Quincy, Pennsylvania.

Michael, Mary

1993 The Story of Washington County. Mary Michael: Williamsport, Maryland.

National Park Service

1997 National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. U.S. Department of the Interior: Washington, D.C.

Schildt, Reverend John

2005 "2005 Marks 200th Anniversary of Chewsville's Bethel Church," in Maryland Cracker Barrel Magazine: Chewsville

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Edition. April/May issue, page 20.

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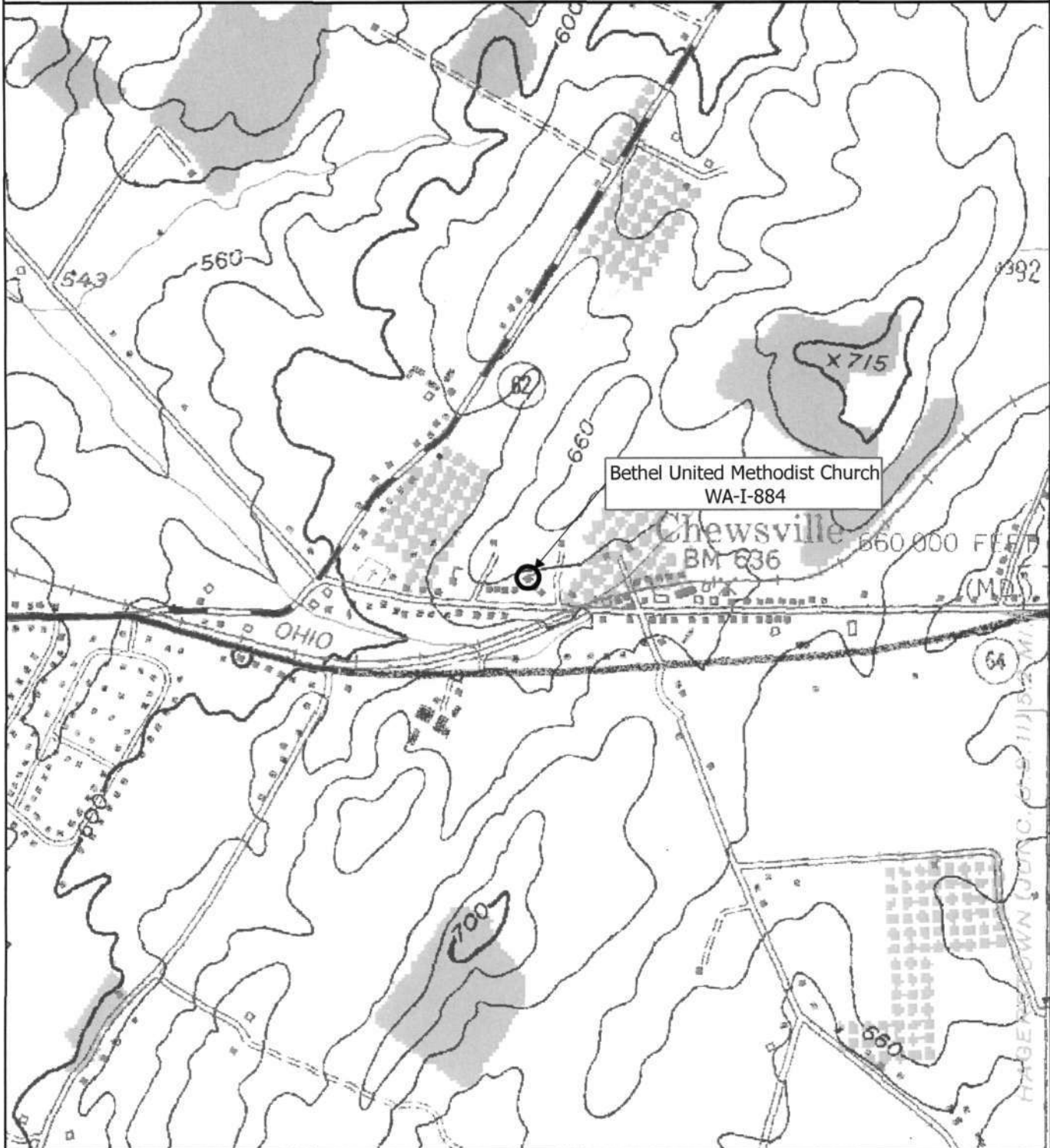
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Date

WA A-1-844



**Bethel United Methodist Church  
WA-I-884**

21006 Twin Springs Drive (MD 804)  
Chewsville, Washington County



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Feet

 Resource

Map Source:  
USGS 7.5' DRG: Hagerstown, MD.



WA-1-884

Bethel United Methodist Church  
Washington County, Maryland  
E. Young

03.2007

MD SHPO

South elevation, view to northeast

Photo # 1 of 6

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Bethel United Methodist Church  
Washington County, Maryland

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MD SHPO

South elevation, view to northeast

Photo # 2 of 6

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WA-I-884

Bethel United Methodist Church  
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND

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MD SHPO

east elevation of c. 1930 addition; view to west

Photo # 3 of 6

RETOUCH2.



WA-I-884  
Bethel United Methodist Church  
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND  
E. YOUNG

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MD SHPO

North & east elevations - note c. 1930, c. 1960, & 2006  
additions new to southwest

Photo # 4 of 6

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WA-I-884

Bethel United Methodist Church  
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MD SHPO

Northwest elevations, 2006 addition, view to southeast

Photo # 5 of 6

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WA-I-884

Bethel United Methodist Church  
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND

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MD SHPO

West elevation - note 1868 core, c. 1980 addition, 2006  
addition; view to southeast

Photo # 6 of 6

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